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Entity 47: "Mushroom Maw"



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Fauxrana muscipula or commonly referred as a Mushroom Maw.

Description

The Mushroom Maw or Fauxrama muscipula is an ambush predator from the amphibia class. This entity is known for its symbiotic relationship with the fungus *Sarinocybe nervosa* and its 2m (6.5ft) tall, bulbous mouth. A mushroom maw primarily lives its entire life dormant, underground; the tip of its upward-facing mouth resides just under the surface of the ground.



A Mushroom Maw with Prey



This entity is only known to live in wintery levels as they lure in prey with warm spots on the ground. These spots will be seemingly perfect circles of ground where snow and ice have melted, with white mushrooms protruding from the soil. Getting eaten by this entity is a sure death sentence due to its chemical emissions and properties; however, they can easily be avoided with caution.

Physiology

Despite mushroom maws being somewhat uncommon, researchers have been able to learn quite a bit about these unique animals.

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Mushroom maw bodies have 2 major sections: The mouth and abdomen. Attached to the abdomen are 2 large legs with feet and toes that act as anchors in the soil (similar to roots on plants), keeping the mushroom maw in one place. The mouth points upwards, just under the soil in its dormant phase. The mouth has 4 large structural bones, 2 on each lip. The 2 bones on each lip connect at the top and hinge with the other 2 at the bottom (**See Figure 2**).

At rest the mouth stays completely shut in its dormant and trap phases.

The abdomen contains all of *F. muscipula*'s vital organs (**See Figure 1**).

In blue shows *F. muscipula*'s digestive track. *F. muscipula* does not have teeth or a stomach; rather, the mouth acts as a stomach. During a chemical process triggered by this animal's trap phase, the mouth

Figure 2

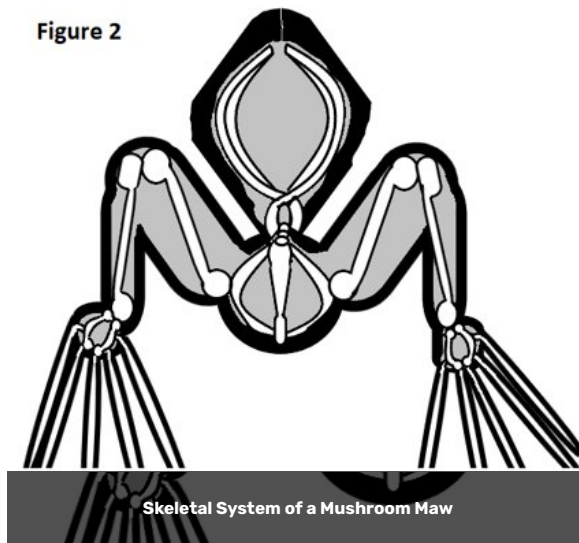
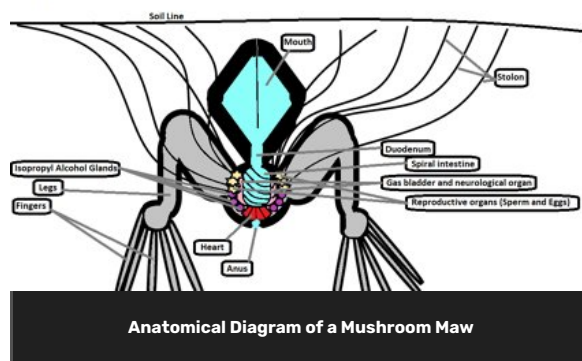


Figure 1



cavity fills with a highly corrosive hydrogen fluoride vapor (HF). This acid will slowly dissolve its prey, and the biotic juices trickle down into the spiral intestine, where nutrients are absorbed and distributed throughout the body. Excess sugars and organic molecules are pushed out of "stolons" and given to the *Sarinocybe nervosa* fungus.

In pink shows the *F. muscipula*'s neurological system. Like a brain, this organ moderates chemical levels from the isopropyl alcohol glands (shown in purple) to the reception of sugar and nutrients going to and from its fungus to its release of sperm and eggs (released from organs shown in yellow). This animal is not sentient and doesn't seem to have the capacity of thought or emotion. The space between this neuro-system and intestine is a gas bladder that will fill with oxygen to be distributed throughout the body. It is theorized that this respiratory organ is evolutionarily derived from a lung.

The organ shown in red is the *F. muscipula*'s heart. This organ, similar to humans, has 2 atriums and 2 ventricles. This heart pumps blood throughout the entire body and is thought to be large enough to supply blood to the large legs and skin adequately.

As *F. muscipula*'s respiratory system lacks muscular organs for its lungs, this animal must rely on getting oxygen through its skin. This animal's skin must remain moist to absorb oxygen and pass it to the bloodstream. As *F. muscipula* remains dormant throughout its life, it has a slow metabolism requiring very little oxygen.

This animal is assumed to only live in snowy environments to keep moisture on its skin.

Behaviors

F. muscipula or Mushroom Maws have only ever been found in snowy areas of wintery backrooms levels. Researchers believe this to occur due to the need of constant moisture on the F. muscipula's skin as well as the S. nerosa's ability to create warm, melted patches of earth that can often lure unsuspecting prey hoping to find warmth. Due to the nature of the backrooms as a whole, researchers are unsure of the evolutionary phylogeny of the F. muscipula, but due to its properties and anatomy have decided to classify this animal as an amphibian.

Mushroom maws only ever move twice during their lifetimes. Once during the early stages of life and a second time when activating its trap phase. During the mushroom maw's early life stages, it will move approximately 2 meters below the surface and root itself in an upward position. In the moment known as the trap phase, the mushroom maw will flex its two powerful legs causing the mouth to jolt upwards, out of the ground at a rapid speed. The mouth will hinge open and will immediately close on its prey. This mouth will not open again, and it will digest its prey inside its mouth.

Once a mushroom maw has sufficiently distributed its resources within itself and the fungal S. nervosa, the mushroom maw will transfer its sperm and egg to the fungus, and they will attach to spores to continue their life cycle. After this act of reproduction occurs, the mushroom maw will die, continuing to supply nutrients to the S. nervosa.

Do's and Don'ts

F. muscipula or Mushroom Maws are incredibly dangerous but very easy to spot and avoid.

Do

- Avoid sudden melted circles in the snow containing white mushrooms.
- Avoid touching or eating the mushrooms.
- Take pictures and notes when you see one of these rare animals.

Don't

- Walk into a circle of melted snow in a wintery level in the backrooms.
- Eat the mushrooms. They are highly toxic and will cause seizures, sweating, vomiting, diarrhea, dilation of the pupils, and eventually suffocation and death.
- Stand inside the circle as there are trace amounts of hydrogen fluoride (HF) in the air which can burn your eyes and lungs.
- Try to open a mushroom maw found in its trap phase. It is most likely filled with HF and O-isopropyl methylphosphonofluoridate which is a powerfully toxic gas that will kill anything with a respiratory system.

Discovery

Though rumors of the Mushroom Maw have been documented from various colonies in winter-type levels in the backrooms for decades, its official documentation wasn't recorded until early 2022 when researcher Geraldine Schrader was on an expedition in level 210 researching zverikals.

"Zverikals, though dangerous are not necessarily violent entities. In fact, they're rather neutral. Think of them like bears. Anyways, I was following one in the forested area - try to stay out of the forested areas, they're super dangerous - and then all of a sudden - SNATCH! Out of nowhere this greenish brown pod snaps out of the ground engulfing the zverikal entirely. There was a struggle for a bit, but the zverikal stopped struggling after a short time."

~ Geraldine Schrader

G. Schrader would later run experiments on the Mushroom Maw giving it the name Fauxrana muscipula for its frog-like attributes and catch and trap predation methods. Schrader would suffer injuries and poisoning in a few instances while researching this animal though she did recover. Since then, numerous studies have been performed across several levels in the backrooms due to its lack of mobility and ease of finding, despite the entity itself being rather rare to find.

Credits

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